



RON WILSON

*From left: Governor John Hoeven, Terry Steinwand, Game and Fish Department director, and Three Affiliated Tribes Chairman Marcus Wells, Jr., introduced a plan in April to coordinate access to Lake Sakakawea on the Fort Berthold Reservation.*

# MOU First of its Kind

The North Dakota Game and Fish Department and Three Affiliated Tribes have agreed to coordinate access to Lake Sakakawea and promote cooperation on hunting and fishing issues on the Fort Berthold Reservation.

Governor John Hoeven and Three Affiliated Tribes Chairman Marcus Wells, Jr. signed the Memorandum of Understanding, the first formal MOU between any tribe and the state concerning hunting and fishing, in April.

"Hunting and fishing are an important part of our shared heritage, and this agreement will help us work together to preserve and manage these valuable resources," Hoeven said. "By entering into this MOU, the Tribe and state will be working together to preserve our hunting and fishing legacy and at the same time make it easier for our residents to enjoy these great natural resources."

The agreement encourages use of the central portion of Lake Sakakawea by not requiring users to have multiple licenses. The Tribe will no longer charge an access or conservation fee to any non-Native Americans for boating or fishing access within the reservation.

"It is more user friendly," said Terry Steinwand, North Dakota Game and Fish Department director. "We agree that hunting, fishing and boating are important to the state, and Lake Sakakawea is a prime resource."

Much like the Department's successful Private Land Open To Sportsmen program, the Game and Fish will make an annual payment of \$25,000 to the Tribe.

The money will be used to offset revenue brought in by the sale of conservation licenses charged to nontribal members crossing tribal lands. Funds may also be used as cost-share for tribal boating development projects, which will further increase access points to the lake with no additional fees.

"Today we have an abundance of game, an abundance of fish ... we want to continue efforts to work together with the state of North Dakota on issues that will benefit everyone," Wells said.

The agreement enables both state and tribal wildlife management agencies to recognize each other's licenses, and to coordinate season dates and bag limits for Native Americans and non-Native Americans while hunting on tribal lands within the reservation boundaries.

Governor Hoeven said the historic MOU also paves the way for future joint efforts between the Tribe and the state in cost-sharing and developing access to Lake Sakakawea.

The MOU helps implement SB 2041, passed by state lawmakers in 2005, which provides for state recognition of tribal hunting licenses issued to non-Natives who hunt on tribal lands within the reservation boundary, and the possession and transportation of legally taken game.

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